THE

WANDERING

Young GENTLEWOMAN;

OR,

CATSKIN.

In FIVE PARTS.

TEWKESBURY:

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PART I.

YOU fathers and mothers, and children alſo,
Draw near unto me, and ſoon you ſhall know,
The ſenſe of my ditty, and I dare to ſay,
The like ha'nt been printed this many a day.
The ſubject which to you I am to relate,
It is of a 'Squire of a vaſt eſtate;
The firſt dear infant his wife did him bear,
It was a young daughter of beauty moſt fair.
He ſaid to his wife had this been a boy,
'Twould have pleaſed me better, & increaſed my joy,
If the next be the ſame ſort, I do declare,
Of what I am poſſeſſed ſhe ſhall have no ſhare.
In twelve months after, this woman we hear,
Had another daughter of beauty moſt clear,
And when that he knew it was a female,
In a bitter paſſion he preſently fell.
Saying, ſince this is of the ſame ſort as the firſt,
In my habitation ſhe ſhall not be nurs'd;
Pray let her be ſent into the country,
For where I am truly this child ſhall not be.
With tears his dear wife unto him did ſay,
Huſband, be contented, I'll ſend her away,
Then to the country with ſpeed ſhe was ſent,
For to be brought up by one who was her friend.
Although that her father he hated her ſo,
She good education on her did beſtow;
And with a gold locket and robes of the beſt,
This ſlighted young female was commonly dreſt.
And when unto ſtature this damſel was grown,
And found from him ſhe had no love ſhewn;
She cry'd, Before I will lie under his frown,
I am fully reſolv'd to range the world round.

PART II.

BUT now mark, good people, the cream of the jeſt,
In what ſort of manner this creature was dreſt;
With Catſkins ſhe made her a robe I declare,
The which for her covering ſhe daily did wear.
Her own rich attire, and jewels beſide,
Them up in a bundle by her they were ty'd,
Then to ſeek her fortune ſhe wander'd away.
And when ſhe had travel'd a cold winter's day,
In the evening tide ſhe came to a town,
When at a knight's door ſhe then ſat her down,
For to reſt herſelf, who was tired before;
This noble knight's lady then came to the door.
Then ſeeing this creature in ſuch ſort of dreſs,
This lady unto her theſe words did expreſs:
Whence cameſt thou girl and what would'd thou have
She ſaid, A night's reſt in your ſtable I crave.
The lady ſaid to her, I'll grant thy deſire:
Come into the kitchen, and ſtand by the fire.
Then ſhe thank'd the lady, and went in with haſte,
There ſhe was gaz'd on from the biggeſt to the leaſt,
And being well warm'd, her hunger being great,
They gave her a piece of good food for to eat.
Then to an out-houſe this creature was had,
Where ſhe with freſh ſtraw then made her a bed.
And when in the morning the day-light ſhe ſaw,
Her riches and jewels ſhe hid in the ſtraw;
And being very cold ſhe then did retire,
To go to the kitchen and ſtand by the fire.
The cook ſaid, my lady hath promis'd that thee
Shalt be as a ſcullion for to wait upon me;
And what ſay'ſt thou girl, art willing to bide?
With all my heart truly, ſhe to him reply'd.

To work with her needle ſhe could very well,
And for raiſing of paſte few could her excel;
She being ſo handy, the cook's heart did win,
And there ſhe was call'd by the name of Catſkin.

PART III.

THE lady had a ſon both comely and tall,
Who oftentimes uſed for to be at the ball,
A mile out of town, one evening tide,
To dance at this ball away he did ride,
Catſkin ſaid to his mother, pray madam, let me,
Go after your ſon now this ball for to ſee?
With that in a paſſion this lady ſhe grew,
And ſtruck her with the ladle, and broke it in two.
And being thus ſerv'd, then ſhe got away,
And with her rich garment herſelf did array;
Then to this ball ſhe with ſpeed did retire,
Where ſhe danced ſo bravely that all did admire.
The ſport being done, this young 'ſquire did ſay,
Young lady, where do you live, tell me I pray,
Her anſwer to him was, ſir, that will I tell,
At the ſign of the broken ladle I dwell.
She being very nimble, got home firſt 'tis ſaid,
And with her Catſkin robes ſhe ſoon was array'd;
And into the kitchen again ſhe did go,
But where ſhe had been, no one did know.
Next night this young 'ſquire, himſelf to content,
To dance at this ball away again went;
She ſaid, pray let me go this ball for to view, (two.
The ſhe ſtruck her with a ſkimmer, and broke it in
Then out of doors ſhe ran full of heavineſs,
And with her rich garment herſelf ſoon did dreſs,
And to this ball ſhe ran away with ſpeed;
Where to ſee her dancing all wonder'd indeed.

The ball being ended, this young 'ſquire then
Said, where is it you live? ſhe anſwer'd again,
Sir, becauſe you aſk me, account I will give,
At the ſign of the broken ſkimmer I live.

Being dark, then ſhe left him, & homeward did hie
And with her Catſkin robe was dreſt preſently.
And into the kitchen amongſt them ſhe went,
But where ſhe had been they were all innocent.

When the 'ſquire came home, and found Catskin there,
He was in amaze, and began for to ſwear,
For two nights at this ball has been a lady,
The ſweeteſt of beauties that ever I ſaw.

She was the beſt dancer in all the whole place,
And very much like our Catskin in the face;
Had ſhe not been dreſt in that coſtly degree,
I ſhould have ſworn it had been Catſkin boldly.

Next night to the ball he did go once more,
And ſhe asked his mother to go as before;
Who having a baſon of water in her hand,
She threw it on Catskin as I underſtand,

Shaking her wet ears out of doors ſhe did run,
And dreſſed herſelf, when this thing ſhe had done,
To the ball once more ſhe then went her ways,
To ſee her fine dancing all gave her the praiſe.

And having concluded, this young 'ſquire he
Said, from whence did you come, pray lady tell me?
Her anſwer was, ſir, you ſhall ſoon know the ſame,
From the ſign of the baſon of water I came.

Then homeward ſhe hurried as faſt as could be,
This young 'ſquire then was reſolved to ſee
Whereto ſhe belonged; then following Catskin,
Unto an old ſtraw houſe, he ſaw her creep in.

He ſaid, O brave Catskin I find it is thee,
Theſe three nights together hath ſo charmed me;
Thou art the ſweeteſt creature my eyes e'er beheld,
With joy and content my heart is now fill'd.
Thou art our cook's ſcullion, but as I have life,
Grant me but thy love, and I'll make thee my wife,
And you ſhall have maids for to be at your call.
Sir, that cannot be, I have no portion at all.
Thy beauty is a portion, my joy and my dear,
I prize it far better than a thouſand a year,
To have my friends conſent I have got a trick,
I'll go to my bed, and I'll feign myſelf ſick.
There's no one ſhall tend me but thee I profeſs;
So one day or other in thy rich dreſs
Thou ſhalt be clad, and if my parents come nigh,
I'll tell them 'tis for thee that ſick I do lie.

PART IV.

HAVING thus conſulted, this couple parted,
Next day this young 'ſquire he took to his bed;
And when his dear parents this thing perceived,
For fear of his death they were heartily grieved.
To tend him they ſent for a nurſe ſpeedily,
He ſaid, none but Catskin my nurſe then ſhall be,
His parents ſaid, no ſon. He ſaid but ſhe ſhall,
Or elſe I'll have none to nurſe me at all.
His parents both wonder'd to hear him ſay thus,
That no one but Catskin muſt then be his nurſe:
So then his dear parents their ſon to content,
Up into the chamber poor Catskin they ſent.
Sweet cordials and other rich things were prepar'd
Which between this couple were equally ſhar'd;
And when all alone, they in each other's arms,
Enjoy'd one another in love's pleaſant charms.

At length on a time, poor Catskin, 'tis ſaid,
In her rich attire ſhe then was array'd:
And when that his mother the chamber drew near,
Then much like a goddeſs did Catskin appear.

Which cauſed her to ſtartle, and thus for to ſay,
What young lady is this, ſon, tell me, I pray;
He ſaid, why 'tis Catskin, for whom I ſick lie,
And except I have her, with ſpeed I ſhall die.

His mother then haſted to call up the knight,
Who ran up to ſee this amazing great ſight:
He ſaid, Is this Catskin we held in ſuch ſcorn?
I ne'er ſaw a finer dame ſince I was born.

The old knight ſaid to her, I pray thee tell me,
From whence thou didſt come, and of what family?
Then who were her parents ſhe gave them to know,
And what was the cauſe of her wandering ſo.

The young 'ſquire cried, If you will ſave my life,
Pray grant this young creature ſhe may be my wife,
His father reply'd, thy life for to ſave,
If you are agreed, my conſent you ſhall have.

Next day, with great triumph and joy, as we hear,
There were many coaches that came far and near,
Then much like a goddeſs, dreſt in rich array,
Catskin was married to the 'ſquire that day.

For ſeveral days this great wedding did laſt,
Where was many a topping and gallant rich gueſt,
And for joy the bells rung all over the town,
And bottles of Canary roll'd merrily round.

When Catskin was married, her fame for to raiſe,
Who ſaw her modeſt carriage all gave her the praiſe,
Thus her charming beauty the 'ſquire did win,
And who lives ſo great now as he and Catskin.

PART V.

NOW in the fifth part I'll endeavour to ſhow,
How things with her parents and ſiſter did go,
Her mother and ſiſter of life are bereſt,
And now all alone the old 'ſquire is left.
Who hearing his daughter was married ſo brave,
He ſaid in my noddle a fancy I have,
Dreſt like a poor man now a journey I'll make,
And ſee if ſhe on me ſome pity will take.
Then dreſt like a beggar he went to her gate,
Where ſtood his daughter, who appear'd very great,
He cried, noble lady, a poor man I be,
And I am now forced to crave your charity.
With a bluſh ſhe asked from whence he came,
With that he told her, and gave her his name,
She cried, I am your daughter whom you ſlighted ſo
Yet nevertheleſs to you ſome kindneſs I'll ſhow.
Through mercy the Lord hath provided for me,
Pray father come in, and ſit down, then ſaid ſhe,
Then the beſt proviſion the houſe could afford,
For to make him welcome was ſet on the board.
She ſaid, you are welcome, feed hearty, I pray,
And if you are willing, with me you ſhall ſtay
So long as you live. Then he made this reply,
I only am come now thy love for to try.
Thro' mercy, my child, I am rich and not poor,
I have gold and ſilver enough now in ſtore;
And for this love which at thy hands I have found,
For thy portion I'll give thee ten thouſand pounds.
So in a few days after, as we underſtand,
This man he went home, and ſold off his land,
And ten thouſand pounds to his daughter did give
And now altogether in love they do live.